

LEAVES FROM MY DIARY

by

GENERAL MOHAN SINGH

1946

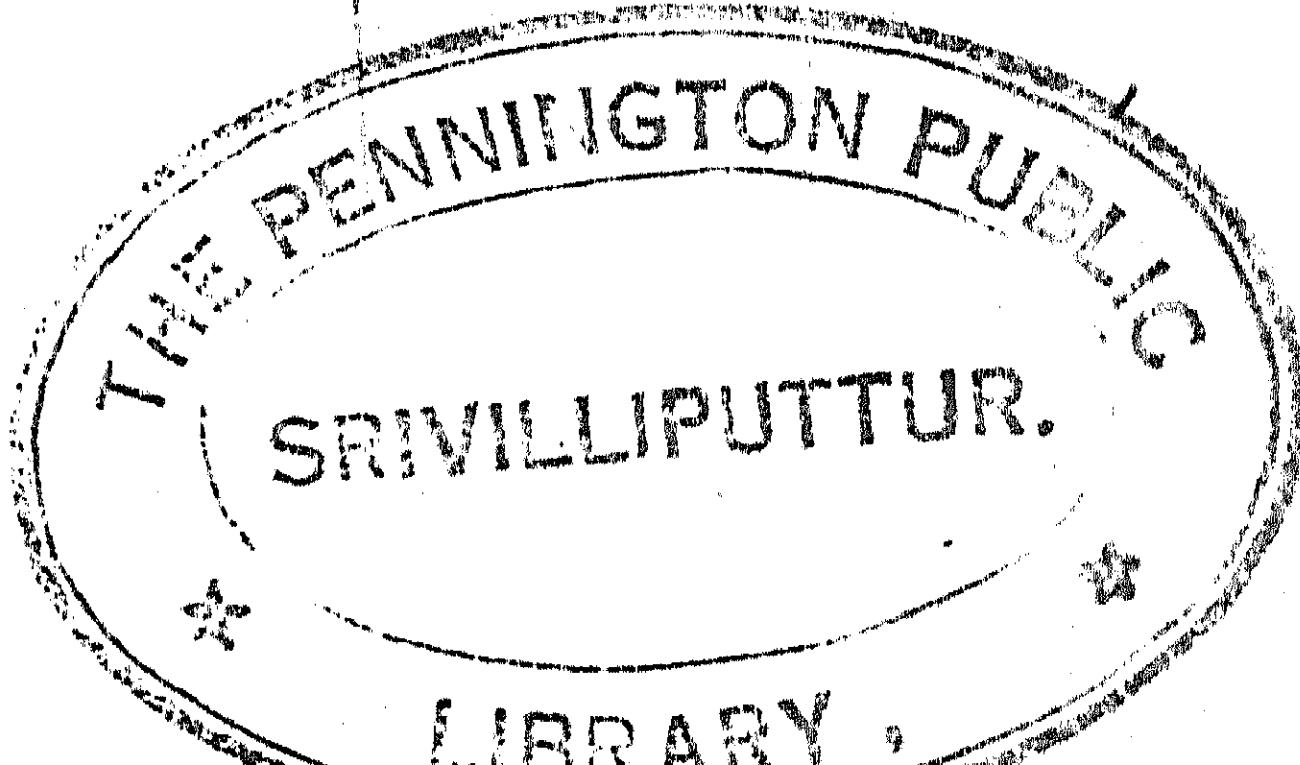
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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

General Mohan Singh's name has today become synonymous with bravery, patriotism and sacrifice. As founder of the I. N. A., he has played a glorious part in the struggle for the emancipation of his country. No wonder that every Indian considers him one of the greatest sons of India.

The idea to request 'General Sahib'—as he is universally referred to in talk by friends and admirers and the common man—to give the people his epic story was born out of the desire to make Indian youth realize the duty they owe to Mother India. When, after greeting me with a gentle smile, General Sahib asked me about the purpose of my visit, I said "I have come to request you to write your story of the formation of the I.N.A. So many stories are being given by different persons—not all of them authentic, not all ring true. People expect you, as founder of the I.N.A., to give an authentic account." "You are right," replied General Mohan Singh, "I have been reading with amusement the different stories about the I.N.A. They are mostly half true and I should like to write an authentic account

but in the present state of my health I simply cannot."

So I asked him if he had done any writing during his detention in Sumatra and Delhi. General Sahib told me that he had with him some papers—"But that is mere scribbling; what will you do with it?"

At my pressing request he began to rummage among his papers lying pell-mell. Some of these he showed me. On my curiously going through them I discovered that Mohan Singh was not only an eminent soldier, but a thinker too. I had never expected our General to possess a philosophic turn of mind. The soldier is commonly supposed to be a doer rather than a thinker. The soldier-philosopher is a rare being. As I went on reading his meditations on life and its different problems, a sense of beauty began to grow on me. "Birds flutter about joyfully and fly without any restrictions from one place to another. O man, it is only you who require a passport to cross this or that boundary." And the delightful essayette on the watch.

In this sophisticated age it gives us the mild shock we need to realize that what we look upon as essential may after all be but a sophistication. It is clear from these pages

that General Sahib has pondered deeply on the political and social problems of our country. His views on Pakistan and Untouchability deserve careful study.

Although I did not succeed in my immediate object of persuading General Mohan Singh to write an account of the I.N.A., I got nonetheless something which will be equally welcome.

General Sahib has promised to give us shortly his story of the I.N.A. Meanwhile let us be content with what he has brought us from the prison cell.

GURMUKH SINGH
“ MUSSAFIR ”

1st January 1946 (morning)

TO-DAY is New Year Day; but I continue to live in the same old cell and the same old way. The new year day has not brought any news nor new change in my monotonous routine of counting the hours—except that I am going to keep my diary from now on.

And what is there to merit being mentioned in a diary at this place and in this sort of life? Perhaps there will be nothing to write at all. Yet, judging from the long experience of my solitary and lonely hours, I feel that in the solitude of dark cells, there are times when one finds oneself in the company of one's own true and real self. In such moments a man can talk with himself in a manner that he can never talk with any one else. His thoughts travel at such a terrific pace that even the best stenographer will find it impossible to reproduce them on paper. Such moods come only occasionally and now that I am allowed the use of pen and paper, I would try to jot down whatever comes out of my mind. It would be, in a way, the interpretation of my own moods and temperament and at a distant date would provide for my own amusement a retrospective picture of my own self.

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LOOKING BACK

I was taken out of the Pearl Hell prison (Singapore) on the afternoon of 23rd November, 1945. As the name of the prison indicates it was nothing short of a living hell. Judging from the behaviour of the British staff

of the prison, it seemed that the war had turned the Britishers into civilised brutes. Even these six years of horrible war have failed to bring the Britishers to the realisation of the fact that Asiatics are men like them. The Australian guards, on the other hand, behave gentlemanly and sympathetically towards Asiatic prisoners. Their attitude was the correct one.

I shall never forget the good old Panditji (the Indian sub-warder of that prison) whom all the Chinese prisoners addressed as "Tape Kong" meaning god.

Having said goodbye through the one-inch hole of the iron doors of the cell to my three-year old companions Rattan and Chittra Bahadur and other Indian prisoners through the courtesy of the Australian guard, and having recovered the watch presented to me by the Japanese on the fall of Singapore—my only trophy of this war—I left the prison only to spend the night in the lock-up at the Central Police Station.

I left Singapore on the 24th morning escorted by Major Wylde. Due to trouble in Calcutta, our 'plane was detained in Rangoon for three days.

At the Rangoon aerodrome I met Col. Thakur Singh, Gupta and Rathuri, who, too, were being taken to India and who accompanied me to the Red Fort. It was a very pleasant surprise to meet them after a separation of three years.

I was taken to the Rangoon Prison. Among its inmates there being about a thousand I.N.A. soldiers, my arrival caused great stir and commotion. The adjutant of the prison was a young Indian, a very kind and sweet officer indeed. To avoid any trouble he acted immediately and took me to his quarters. I spent those two nights in very pleasant company

and got an opportunity to study the trend of ideas of my brother officers in the British Indian Army. They were a fine lot of young men, extremely obliging and sympathetic. There I had a severe attack of stomach-ache. Dr. Rajan who attended me was a very pains-taking officer. He sat by my side for two nights continuously and watched me with motherly tenderness. I wonder if I can ever repay what those boys did for me. The third night at Rangoon was spent in CISDIC in the company of another nice lot of officers.

Finally, on the 27th night of November I was flown to Delhi, and at 5 a.m. sharp locked up SAFELY in one of these cells where I am writing to-day.

The parting from my escort, Major Wylde, was so touching that I am tempted to note it down. Incidents like this do not occur daily. It proved conclusively to me that human nature is the same all the world over. It is the rulers—and vested interests—that contrive to keep us separate from each other and it is, therefore, most essential that we should get out of the grip of their evil hands and build a new world based on the equality and oneness of the human race.

Major Wylde, after bringing me to my cell, looked at me with a tender and steady gaze, his eyes flooded with tears. He saluted me and in a very touching tone said, "God be with you and protect you," then shook my hand very warmly with a parting "Good-bye and God bless you!" The door of my cell was immediately locked up. I stood alone to ponder over the words of my escort.

All through the journey, from Singapore to Delhi, Major Wylde's behaviour towards me had been gently and full of deep human understanding. I

recollect the words he uttered when he took off his pistol at the Rangoon aerodrome: "Damn it all.... I know what sort of man I am escorting and these..."

I must have stood for nearly ten minutes in my cell pondering over Major Wylde's behaviour and I said to myself: "It is only right that I should hate the imperialist British system, the greatest and blackest of exploitation but I need not hate any individual Englishman. Here was an Englishman as good, kind and noble as a man ought to be, but as helpless and powerless as any other victim of a vicious system."

When the door opened in the morning Shangara [Major Shangara Singh] was the first to meet me and I began a new chapter in my life.

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It is now already more than a month since I was brought here. Quite a lot has happened and much can be written but I do not want to concern myself with details—except of a few things.

It was fortunate that Hardial [Maj. Hardial Singh of 3rd Bihar] happened to be here. He has done such a lot for me that it is impossible for me to repay his kindness.

Jaswant [Mrs. Mohan Singh] is here. She has seen me several times. She is absolutely unchanged. She is sweet, humble, obedient and very dutiful but there is something wrong with me. I do not talk much with her and feel as if I were meeting a stranger.

Uncle Hakumat Singh, who educated me, came to see me. He was even now so full of that fatherly love, which he used to have in abundance when I was a young orphan. He couldn't control himself and cried like a child. How loving these old people are!

Time has wrought such a change in him that I could not even recognise him at first sight.

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Last night [31st December] I had a frank and heart to heart talk with my friend Gurbakhsh. The talk was a very bitter pill which would shake any good and sincere man like him. I feel it was cruel of me so to talk, but, impelled by my duty towards him, I could not help. He took it well and bravely but has not fully grasped the possibility of an unpleasant truth which may be hidden behind all this talk.

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There is something which has been disturbing and agitating my mind since my arrival here. I have gathered from newspapers that there were two I.N.A.s, the first and the second. It has pained me to hear this. I am really perplexed and it is a mystery to me who is at the back of this. Who is trying to create a division amongst us.

Is this not a trait of our land which has a tradition and tendency for division ? or is it a legal trick which may facilitate the defence of I.N.A. personnel ? or is it a device of our rulers to create a division in our ranks so that one may speak against the other ? But whatever it may be, it is not a fact.

The fact is that the I.N.A. was one, is one and will remain ONE. The same military personnel continued in the so-called first and second I.N.A.s. The only difference is that in December, 1942 there was a trial of strength between the I.N.A. and the Japanese with the result that about 10,000 officers and men were separated, who did not join again. It was that test which proved to the Japanese that Indians could not be exploited and that when it was a question of

honour, Indians could still, even after 200 years of slavery, give proof of being alive.

In that test, India lost the flower of the I.N.A., whose heroic stand in a very dark hour remains yet to be told.

When in Pearl Hell prison (Singapore) I heard some details of the untold sufferings those beloved sons of Mother India had to undergo and of the price that they paid for the honour of our country—the blood of nearly 5,000 young, dauntless heroes—I became very bitter. I felt that those responsible for sending the cream of patriots to certain death in New Guinea and other South-East Asiatic islands, must be tried as war criminals. I also then thought that to hide their own crime of sending the most patriotic element to those unknown islands to die as mere slaves of the Japanese, some people would try to dub them as unpatriotic.... But in the Red Fort I meet with a different attitude altogether. All the officers who come to me have nothing but the greatest respect and admiration for those brave boys. To mention only one, my friend Gurbakhsh (Col. G. S. Dhillon) on his first meeting me said, "Sir, I am sorry that I did not stand by you and you can rightly consider me a traitor. But circumstances were such that some sincere people thought it a good policy to join.... but I must say that those men who were sent to New Guinea and other islands were the real patriots. I wish they were on the Burma Front—and then the story of the I.N.A. would have been a different one. I have the greatest admiration for them. It is their sacrifice which made the Japanese respect Indians. In those days it required guts—manly guts—to say 'NO' to the Japanese. They, those

15
heroes, nearly ten thousand of them, said 'NO' knowing they were courting certain death. What courage can compare with theirs!"

It dawned on me that it was difficult to blame any one person for their fate. Probably those in power at that time were helpless. Circumstances are such sometimes that no one can help. My countrymen, do not underrate or forget the epic stand taken to defend your honour in those far off places by men, who can never return to us.

2nd January

THREE years have passed. Time, the great healer of all sorts of wounds—physical, mental or spiritual, has miserably failed in this case to diminish the bitterness of my soul. All through I have been unhappy. I have not experienced as yet the real peace of the soul. Bitter memories have been haunting me like an inexorable ghost. I have forgiven but not forgotten.

I continue to rot here as a helpless victim of a ruthless system of brutal force. I have committed no crime against any individual or any people. What I wanted and worked for was the complete eradication of slavery from India. It was indeed an attempt to restore to nearly one-fifth of the human race the status of FREE men and women. That sincere desire of mine was considered quite a big crime by those who posed as the great standard-bearers of the freedom of India. What an irony of fate!

Those directly responsible for putting me into the position where I find myself now have fallen lower than me. I pity them. Others, who are my fellow-sufferers to-day, I sympathise with them. I bear no enmity or ill-will against any one of them. But the hatred and

bitterness against the system has not diminished even by an iota.

A most passionate fire is consuming me from within. There is a burning desire to do something. Something is driving me to action but Although patience itself has become a trial of nerves, yet patiently I wait for the time when this wretched and miserable life of mine would get another opportunity to serve so holy a cause.

Although mentally and spiritually I am as strong as ever, physically I am not what I used to be. What a change this span of three years of solitary life has wrought in my constitution! That could not be helped. If what is left of me can be used in the service of my country I shall feel quite content with my lot.

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Captain Natha Singh (5/2nd Punjab) gave a right and sincere picture. It has hurt me.

All facilities and comforts are provided for those who May God help us! No help is given where it is needed and to those who really deserve it but!

Thousands have lost their lives for this sacred cause unheard and unwept. Now they are being thrown into the limbo of the past unconsidered and unmentioned. And the irony is that some of the gentlemen who are now trying to reap the good harvest which has come because of by the sacrifice of those martyrs, are

Poor, humble and helpless soldiers! we have no room in this system. This system must go if we want to live honourably. It is up to us to see that it

definitely does go.

Something again! Another report. How many more will follow? It pains me to put down everything here in detail. There are men without the bare necessities (shoes, turbans and other clothes). On the other hand, others.....and what happens? Oh, you silent sufferers, it is time you should speak!

3rd January

I MET Jehangir (Lt.-Col. A. D. Jehangir). He was one of the first to volunteer for the I.N.A. after the fall of Singapore in 1942. He remained for some time on my personal staff.

In the course of conversation he said that he had something important to talk to me and gradually disclosed of his own accord that he was the real author of that nefarious pamphlet "Our Struggle" published under the name of Rash Behari Bose. He said that he regretted his action and apologised at the same time. He said that he was exploited by some unscrupulous people and explained fully the circumstances which made him write. He said that disciplinary action taken against him by me just before the crisis in 1941 had affected his mind but he had felt sorry for his action since then.

It is just like Jehangir. He possesses a very simple heart and can easily be exploited.

That pamphlet came to my hands after the Japanese had released me from their custody. Rattan who had already read it brought it to me, saying by way of introduction, "Sir, read this pack of lies and you will know how low some can fall. I wonder how these people can face the public after writing these untruths." I, too, read it. I was very inquisitive about its authorship

for I knew that Rash Behari Bose did not possess enough intelligence to be able to write such a clever and insidious piece of work. To-day its author has voluntarily come. All along I had thought that it was someone else. I never imagined that it could be Jehangir. He knew that although I had taken disciplinary action against him in the interest of the whole Army, yet I had a soft corner for him. I was really grieved but at the same time pitied Jehangir. I assured him that it was perfectly all right. I know Jehangir's nature. Poor boy ! But what a lesson to me !

Happy news. The trio, Shah Nawaz, Sehgal and Gurbakhsh [G. S. Dhillon] have been released. For once the British have acted with prudence.

The trial of these three was in fact a test trial. The whole I.N.A. was being tried. Their release means the release of the I.N.A. All of us of the I.N.A. had followed the proceedings of the first court-martial with rapt attention throughout, not because our own fate hung in the balance, although that too was a consideration with many of us, but because it was the trial of a subject race and the whole nation had, therefore, taken it up and made it its own case. The verdict has been given ; it has greatly heartened us. For once we have received good tidings.

But how will these boys take it up ? Will they realise that all the acclamation and admiration which they will receive from the entire nation will not be for their personalities but for a cause for which they had fought ? If they take everything showered on them as representatives of the I.N.A. then they will greatly profit by it, but if unfortunately they take

whatever comes to them as their personal privilege, then it will be harmful for them in the long run. It is, therefore, in their interest to remain cool, calm and unaffected in the midst of the countrywide receptions that will be showered on them. Good-bye and good luck, my old comrades, the brave trio !

4th January

SOLITARY confinement in dark cells and hard prison life and labour react differently on different persons. Some face these bravely and achieve great spiritual strength, self-control and self-realization, others break completely and become mental wrecks. At times some of them become so desperate that they do not hesitate to resort to suicide although "when life is more terrible than death it is then the true valour to live."

To some, prison life is a blessing in disguise. Here in these lonely and dark cells one has more than the required time to study one's own self and ponder over one's past and plan the future on one's own resources. It makes even a young man mellow. It convinces one how small one really is. To others this same prison life is a living hell. Here in this same cell one is constantly reminded of the injustice man does to man, of the pleasure that one has been robbed of, of the rights that one has been denied and the degradation to which one is forced to submit. No wonder man becomes desperate and revengeful.

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Difficulties can make a man but they can break him too. It is the stuff you are made of that counts. Friend ! face the world boldly, be prepared for the worst—and you will never be surprised. Welcome

calmly and with pleasure all that befalls you as a small act in the long drama of life, and ever hope for the best. Always rely on your own efforts.

Self-effort is the only means by which we can improve and increase our abilities. The characteristic of a creative mind is inner self-effort. Every action of ours affects our character—if we act nobly and courageously we can build for ourselves a noble edifice of character, a treasure of which one can justly feel proud of.

Develop an adventurous spirit and be brave. It is that spirit alone on which depended the past, and depends the present and the future progress of mankind. Where truth, righteousness, your own honour, the honour of your country or the well-being of mankind in general demands that you should act, always act.

Never be afraid of difficulties. Face them bravely. They are placed in our way to be cleared off and not to clear us off. “Men do not become good by being kept in cotton-wool but by fighting difficulties and temptations.”

Get up and be prepared to fight. Each little success that you achieve in this evergoing struggle of mankind will harden you, strengthen you and thus make you better equipped to face what awaits you next.

If ever you fail, remember that it is the stuff in you that counts. There must be some inherent weakness. Look for it within yourself and you will find it. Don’t try to find fault elsewhere, for if you do, you will never find it. Reform and improve your own self first. External success is in direct proportion to your victories within. The most important conflicts and

contradictions are internal and the most important changes come from inside.

Friend, even when you are beaten flat and are surrounded on all sides by numerous seemingly insurmountable difficulties and misfortunes, never give way. Stand your ground courageously and you will surmount the insurmountable. Your true value will be assessed by the number of obstacles that you have cleared. Remember what Carlyle said, "The purest ore comes from the hottest furnace, the brightest lightning from the darkest clouds."

They say "All is well that ends well". The end as everyone knows, may come at any time and if it is the end that matters then make it a glorious one in your case.

6th January

WE have been brought to a new camp in Delhi Cantonment. Here I share my small room with Maj.-Gen. Aziz Ahmed, an old colleague of mine.

7th January

MADAN departs for I hear he regrets his action very much. He seems to be a nice lad. He was influenced and prompted by someone else when he

Who does not make mistakes in this world? Men should not be condemned for life just by one wrong action—a chance should always be given. Who knows his internal conflict at that time! But, then, is the change a real one or has it come about because of the present circumstances in the country? I hope it is a real one. He is still young and he can easily

atone for whatever mistakes he might have committed foolishly in the past. It is never too late, boy.

9th January

THE more I know of Jagir [Lt.-Col. Jagir Singh] the more I like him. He has impressed me as a quiet, sincere and selfless person. It is lucky that I have been brought here and have discovered another very true friend. Personal contacts are very important and we can never study each other unless we have personal contacts.

11th January

I HAVE been moved down to-day from a crowded place to a comparatively lonely one. Authorities have been very considerate and this solitary place will suit my temperament.

Here my room is locked at 7 o'clock sharp. This was not being done whence I come here. Yet, here, in spite of this restriction, I feel quite happy and am straightway settled. It is so very calm and peaceful here.

I have spent the last five days in the company of my old colleagues and comrades. They were all very considerate and kind to me. But I found myself a misfit in their company. I longed for quiet, calm, and aloofness. What a thing to long for! And I have got it.

I feel a change is coming on me. Things I used to be fond of now repel me. I meet people with great enthusiasm and for a short while I feel really happy but soon the interest wanes away and a desire to remain alone comes. Will this pass too?

I am thinking of Aziz and Jagir. I hope they are not offended at my move. They were so sweet and helpful to me.

Barar [Lt.-Col. Mahinder Singh Barar] arrived to-day. His arrival came as a very pleasant surprise. I had been looking forward to his arrival with great anxiety. He looked quite fit and healthy but he, too, has suffered immensely. He gave a supreme example of loyalty to a colleague. There are very few who suffer for mere loyalty to a friend, although in the East thousands of our young men lost their lives simply because they had pledged loyalty to a petty fellow like me. In my confinement I was unaware of the sufferings of these brave and dauntless sons of India and therefore it did not pain me. Now reports pour from all directions describing heart-rending experiences of those martyrs. I feel very guilty and can hardly sleep. But, what can I do for them now? My task should be to tell my nation what those boys stood for and it is then up to the nation to do what it thinks right. Their sufferings, their courage and, above all, their spirit in the face of sure death are deeds worthy to be emblazoned in letters of gold in our history. I am certain that their souls will be contented if they know that their efforts did not go in vain. It is up to us to fulfil what they started. Will the nation fail them? Mahinder was one of them. I owe him much. His friendship is a treasure beyond any price.

16th January

THE picture of life has two sides; one is bright and the other dark. Let neither the experience of the bright side intoxicate, dazzle or blind you, nor the

sight of the dark side deject, dishearten and frighten you, for, it is by facing both the sides with the same steady calm and unperturbed looks that make a real man.

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The world is full of life and energy and we ought not to suffer from lack of it. The sun is the symbol of all life in this universe. The more you live in sunshine, the healthier you will feel and the longer you will live. Whenever you feel exhausted, worn-out or tired, leave your narrow surroundings and go out to the heart of nature and be one with it.

Cut your little self off from your worldly worries and anxieties and absorb yourself in natural scenery and beauties. Let the birds and animals, flowers and vegetables be your only companions for an hour or so and you will feel an entirely different person. In the morning learn to spend an hour or two in the company of singing birds and the rising sun and you will start with an abundance of life and energy not only sufficient for you but will even benefit those who come to you. Therefore, friend, do not starve in the midst of plenty.

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You call yourself wise but you have to learn quite a lot from your own child. Watch him how he acts, plays and sleeps and you will learn many things. Even painful and hard beating in the evening will not stop him from sleeping soundly in the night. This is because his heart is simple and pure.

Let nothing disturb you. Learn to face life and remain calm and cool in danger. Do not attach so much importance to your little and insignificant life. You are not half so important as you imagine yourself

to be. The world will go on without you just the same. No one was ever born who was absolutely indispensable to the world. If you remember this, all will go well with you.

17th January

PANDIT Jawaharlalji visited us to to-day. It was a surprise visit.

I had never met him before and it was my greatest desire to see this great and noble son of India.

I hate hero-worship but my profound respect and admiration for him and his work amounted to something very akin to hero-worship.

I have read his writings with great avidity and have therefore spent with him many a quiet and thoughtful hour. I do not count myself a learned man but for whatever mental progress I have made, I am highly indebted to him.

How he impressed me to-day ! He was not looking as well as I used to see him in his photos.

He looked very tired and worn-out. I was the first to meet him and I felt he met me in a strange indifferent manner. He gave me an impression that he was mentally preoccupied and absorbed in something else. Then, other officers came and we all gathered round him and even then he was not in a good mood.

After that I had a separate talk with him. I wanted to talk about many things but finding him very tired I confined myself to just the outline of our story and finished within half an hour. Later on he talked to all of us together. He started in the same indifferent way but after half an hour a change came over him. He became very cheerful and continued talking for

about two hours and it was really pleasant to be in his company in that mood. He told us many useful things, and explained to us the political situation in India. He very strongly advised us that after release we should under no circumstances hurriedly join this or that party but study the whole situation very carefully before taking any step.

He then left and I felt that I had met someone who had something of the ancient, the modern and the coming India all harmoniously blended in him.

22nd January

I WAS very pleased to meet my old friend Sardar Kapoor Singh. How very nice of him to come here! He was a little anxious about my future and was prepared to extend financial aid to see me well-established in life. It was very considerate of him to think of my future. But what future!

He also tried to ascertain my political views. I was not in a position to say anything. How could I? He then put before me his own views and tried to explain the political situation in the Punjab. Things appeared quite new to me. I reserved my opinion even then.

The political ideologies of the Sikhs, as explained to me, although apparently reasonable and correct from the Sikh point of view, I feel in my heart, do not suit my temperament.

I would like to associate myself with something higher something that affects not just one community but a wider sphere of mankind. Even failure in such a venture means more to me than success in one fundamentally narrow. One per cent achievement in something large has more value than cent per cent success in a small thing. Some may consider my attitude

visionary and devoid of reality but I consider an attempt worth it. I should follow the road which my conscience points out to me.

I will not silence my conscience, my best friend, just to please a few worldly friends. This silent friend is my greatest and truest guide. God! give me sufficient strength so that I may not be led astray and become unfaithful to such a friend!

I think my friend Kapoor Singhji understood my point of view and appreciated my stand. I requested him to send me some books and now I live in the hope that they will come.

28th January

I WAS called before the Court of Enquiry which is held to legalise the case against officers. Another farce! What are they trying us for?

29th January

NOT to be able to stand criticism about himself is one of the greatest weaknesses in man. There are only a few who do not have it. Worse than this is to feel puffed up at the least praise given us.

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If you want to command some day, learn to obey first. Most important it is to obey the call of your own conscience, and before ever contemplating to govern others learn to govern your own self.

“The foes with which they waged their strife
were passion, self and sin;
The victories that laurelled life were fought
and won within.”

(Edward H. Dewart.)

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He who assumes the role of a leader and expects the people to follow him, must be clear in his mind whither he is leading. He should be prepared to show the way himself.

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Avoid an empty talker. He is only a self-deceived fool.

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It is far easier to destroy than to construct. Man lives by construction and not by destruction.

30th January

THE peace that I am now enjoying in my solitude I would not like to change for any company. Solitude itself has now bowed down before me and has become my lovable companion.

Sweet peace, forsake me not !

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Truth does not require an army with tanks to enforce itself. A religion that uses force to establish its creed is no religion, for religion is based on truth and love and not on violence. Religion and sword are contradictory things.

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A threat, without any will or power to enforce it, is of no value.

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A thing for which you pay the highest price is not always the best article in the market.

Real wisdom lies in seeing your own follies.

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Things attained with difficulty can be retained with ease.

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It is better to have an open enemy than a treacherous friend. "An open foe may prove a curse but a pretended friend is worse."

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The man who possesses superfluous wealth is often as useless to society as a pauper. While he has so much wealth at his disposal that he gets all that he wants in life without the least effort of his body or mind, the other has absolutely nothing at his disposal to educate himself or buy some tools in order to bring into use his mental and physical powers. In both cases decay is the natural consequence.

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Of what use are your riches if you do not possess a rich heart?

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Friend, be happy and take life as it comes. You seem to be cracking and sinking fast under the burden of self-created worries. What disturbs you and tortures you so much that you are passing sleepless and restless nights?

1st February

ONKAR NATH came to see me. He is very obliging and appears to be a selfless man. He comes every week to see me and I hear he has taken certain vows. I must know something more about him.

Krishan Dev and Jai Dev also came to visit me. They said that they had come with a bundle of books but the prison authorities had not allowed the books to be brought in. As they were late we could not talk about anything important.

2nd February

“RELIGIONS are many but reason (truth) is one.

The broad-minded see the truth in different religions, the narrow-minded see only the difference”

Confucius.

The Great Teachers of the world left a legacy of a common message of goodwill, love and truth for all human beings. Religions were created by them to bring unity, instil love and kill hatred amongst mankind but unfortunately to-day they are the fountain-heads of disunity and hatred. The fault is ours. We lay stress only on personalities and not on principles which are common to all religions. There may be some truth in racial disunity but religious disunity is nothing but a man-made farce.

If you want to win the love of God, love His whole Creation. The least you should do is to love your own kind, i.e. mankind.

Extreme and bigoted attachment to men of your own creed can also mean the hatred of others. Proportionately with your hatred for men of different beliefs, you belittle yourself and are also hated by God. A true lover of God loves all who love God, irrespective of colour, caste and creed.

The slave of one religion is as good or as bad a slave as a political or an economic slave.

Religion is meant to assist us and to be used by us to discover the beautiful road of Truth which will lead us to true Light.

5th February

ANY religion that requires guns or state interference and support or any other form of physical intimidation to keep itself alive is dead already. True religion

hrives on Love and Truth. By resorting to violence, it seeks self-destruction. But the real religion of a man or woman is the life that he or she is living and not the daily chanting of prayers or the observance of other outward symbols. To-day, unfortunately, to us religion means only the reciting of holy hymns though we may not live a word of them. It is a pity that such good and noble teachings of our Teachers are wasted on us!

Let religions be like running streams and not like stagnant pools. A running brook is always on the move and remains fresh and clean. It symbolises the onward march of time and we must keep pace with the time; otherwise we shall be left behind. A running brook moves on, adapting itself to the life of land until it reaches the ocean, receiving and distributing freely on its journey to the ocean. Religions should be brooks taking us to the Great Ocean of Truth. A pool, on the other hand, however fresh and clean in the rainy weather, is bound to become dirty in the course of time.

Your God may live in your temples but my God lives everywhere. The entire universe is my temple and life itself is a holy pilgrimage for me. There is only one God and in search of Him you need not go anywhere at all. The voice of Truth coming from your own conscience, to which you seldom care to listen, is His Voice.

7th February

RELIGIONS are like separate streams, meant to lead us to the Great Ocean of Truth and Light. We quarrel over trifles. We all want to reach that ocean by these streams but foolishly we divide and subdivide these streams into petty narrow religious

channels, which become so small that none reaches the sea. If only we unite by following the Truth contained in all, we can turn all these streams into a very big river, which will certainly take us to the desired destination.

One very grave defect of religion is that it builds a great faith in a supernatural power, absolute and supposed to be responsible for all that happens in this little world of ours. This kills our natural instinct to revolt against inequality and injustice. All sorts of inequalities, from which we may suffer, we are told, are due to Karma and for our sufferings in this world of 'maya' we are promised high rewards in an unknown heaven. Religious dogmas gradually destroy our rationality and convert us into mental bankrupts. Very often we become fanatics and instead of developing universal love, we become unconsciously of course, the helpless victims of the custodians of religions, who generate unlimited hatred and cruelty within us. We then do not hesitate to kill, torture, destroy and burn the property of those who do not believe in the faith. Atrocities are committed in the name of religion and are considered noble deeds, so noble indeed that the doors of heaven are flung open for these perpetrators of cruel deeds! May God, if there be one, keep me away from such a heaven!

O befooled religious pauper, beyond this little world of ours another heaven is NOT. This is your heaven. Devils here have converted it into a hell for you. Get up and demand your rights. Live happily. This world should be your paradise.

11th February

RELIGION, as understood by our masses, is the greatest obstruction to free-thinking. It is a most effective and poisonous drug in the hands of a few exploiters who use it to intoxicate us and thus blind us to the true fact that due to this shameless exploitation, our masses live a most wretched and miserable life. To fatten one, a thousand must starve. Who is responsible for this? Certainly not God—it is the religious vested interest. This vested interest is very much against progress. Progress in science was made in the teeth of religious opposition. Many scientists lost their all and progress was not made with the help of religions but in spite of them. We have to get out of their fetters to flower into a healthy and vigorous nation. If we are not prepared to live as political slaves let us also not live as religious slaves.

10th February

REVOLUTION, like evolution, is a continual process. We cannot afford to stop dead at any point. The world is ever changing and ever moving forward; and in a changing world, nothing that is stationary can keep its relative position.

We cannot separate the past from the present. The roots of the present are planted deeply in our past. Yesterday and to-morrow are both intimately connected with to-day. Yesterday is already passed. We cannot do anything about it. To-morrow is a mystery—we may not even see it. We must learn to take care of To-day.

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Any leader who himself organises and sets up a big propaganda machine to boost himself to the position

of a demi-god is in fact a rogue. Such men, once they achieve a position of importance, whether by their own merits or by a stroke of good fortune, will have no scruples in employing any methods to retain their positions.

Drastic measures are essential at times. There are diseases which cannot be cured without drastic operations. We might have to cut off a part of our body, once so vital but now completely rotten and putrefied, in order to save the body itself.

20th February

I AM not feeling well. It is due to my own carelessness.

23rd February

SARDAR Gurbachan Singh came to meet me. He has been extremely helpful and goes out of the way to do this and that for me. I was not used to accepting favours without returning them. To-day my position is such that I continue receiving without any hope of returning. If this continues for a long time I shall have no credit. I shall be a debtor to all. I feel very much obliged and I am touched by their generosity. I do not deserve so much sympathy and regard. Those who expect much from me will be disappointed.

24th February

BRING my faults to me, my friend. I shall then open my heart to you and will be yours. The moment you start singing my praise, you put me on my guard. I lose confidence in you.

"Measure thy desires according to the life in thee, O you little man." Is not this the lesson of all lessons for you?

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I do not underrate the necessity for the creation of enthusiasm and spirit in the masses but the clapping, cheering and applauding of the masses means very little to me. To me the appreciation of my work by five thinking men means more than the shouting of fifty thousand unthinking men.

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To look for faults, my friend, you only have to use a small mirror.

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I am provided by nature with two ears, two eyes and fortunately with only one tongue. It follows, therefore, that the use of these organs must also be in the same proportion. You have still to learn to be silent. Keep your eyes open, ears alert and tongue under strict control.

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Do not speak ill of others. Are not their faults your own? What right have you to condemn them for something from which you yourself are not free?

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Is it not the duty of higher souls to show compassion for and sympathise with the sufferings of the multitudes? Do not they come down to the common lot, associate themselves with the poor and then pull them up a little from their miserable wretchedness? To achieve one per cent success or even a fraction of it in the improvement of the lot of the general masses is far higher an achievement than a cent. per cent. individual success.

How can you be happy and content when you are surrounded all around by unhappiness and discontent, misery and poverty, disease and dirt, hunger and privation? Don't be a coward and runaway from these ugly aspects, but face them and be brave. No one in this world was sent unnecessarily. It is the duty of every man to leave the world a little better than he found it. This, too, should be your aim. This world is not as it ought to be. It is obvious that no one can do anything single-handed but every one has his or her own part to play in this great and ever-going drama of mankind. You must play your part well and let others do what they like.

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The best friend a man can have in this world is his own conscience. I can perhaps be successful in deceiving millions but I cannot run away from my own conscience. It does not talk but speaks all the same. Though apparently silent, yet it is more audible and piercing than the voice of anything else around me. If I ignore it, it does not protest but warns me all the same. If in spite of this I continue to silence it, suppress it and crush it, the fault is mine and if it becomes faint and feeble in its warning, it is I who is to be blamed. If I persist in my obstinacy to ignore it completely then it bids farewell and even in its farewell it leaves this message: "Poor child, I pity you. You have lost your best friend. A day will come when you will repent. It will then be too late. Farewell for the time being. I am leaving you reluctantly into the hands of your own obstinacy. You compelled me to do so. But I will return to you willingly if ever you care to recall me again. Farewell, poor child, farewell."

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Should it be my desire that I should be liked by all, then I should hate none. I cannot demand more love than I am prepared to give. If I am rich in love, my account shall always be on the credit side. Real secret of love is hidden in your own self. The less you hate, the more you are loved.

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Seek and live in the company of those whom you think to be wiser than yourself. Learn the secret of their greatness and wisdom. True greatness lies in doing great and wise deeds and not in sitting in high governmental chairs.

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Real sincerity consists in not deceiving your own self.

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The more you cut down your wants, the more contented and satisfied you feel.

25th February

WE must be prepared to pay the price of everything we want. The more precious the thing desired, the higher the price.

The dearest and most precious object to a mother in this world is her own baby. To get that, she has not only to suffer the pangs of most excruciating pain but has to risk her very life.

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The value of a thing lies in its after-effects and not in its taste or appearance. We are prepared to take a regular course of a most bitter medicine when we know that it will cure us of a disease from which

we are suffering. But we think not of this when it comes to sensual pleasures. All sensual enjoyments produce a bitter after-effect. Be it wine, woman or anything else, the more you enjoy, the worse the reaction.

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If you want sound health and physical fitness, select a healthy diet and do not go after taste. Similarly if you want to keep your soul and spirit healthy, do not go after sensual pleasures.

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Go on constantly giving and your account will be increasing on the credit side.

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Schools, colleges and universities are nothing but nurseries. At the most they are preparatory institutions. The real school in this world is the school of life and the subject of all subjects is the lesson of adversity. Success in this school is proportionate to success in this great subject.

We remain students all through our lives and the most successful student is he who learns and benefits, not only from his personal experience but also from the experiences of others before him.

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A hero is usually a quiet person. He needs no advertisement. His deeds speak for him in a more eloquent language. He does not know that he is a hero and therefore can easily be recognised by his silence and humility. Those who shout in self-praise,

are less likely to be heard and have to face bitter disappointments.

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Knowledge is such a rich treasure that the more freely its possessor distributes it, the richer he becomes. It is like the scattered seed that comes back to the sower a hundredfold.

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Human nature, under all colours, castes and creeds is the same. For a perfect knowledge of human nature, you simply have to study your own nature. Carefully study in your own self the reactions of things spoken to you, deeds done to you and the impressions left upon you by others. Then, remember, the same applies to others.

26th February.

NEVER give an immediate reply to anything which has agitated or upset you. Sleep over it, at least for one night. This alone has got the power to put you right. Remember there is nothing like 'forgive and forget'.

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Do not avoid the right road simply because it is full of difficulties. Only the right road can take you to your destination.

Let truth be your guide and your pole-star when all around you is darkness.

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The education and the awakening of the masses and the creation of a healthy community is more important than building a strong fleet and army. Although

the latter can be built quicker, but they can also be destroyed in no time.

O foolish man, what is it that is troubling you? Is the desire to accumulate other people's gold an unquenchable thirst with you? If that is so then shame on you! Don't you know that someone's gain is another man's loss?

The test of a person or a party comes at the time of a crisis. Even a poor and worn-out machine can go on working smoothly on a straight road, but in a cross-country or uphill climb it simply cracks. Only a well-built and properly cared-for machine does its work under adverse conditions.

27th February

BIRDS flutter about joyfully and fly, without any restrictions, from one place to another. They are free to move as far as their wings can carry them. Each one in a way is the master of the whole universe. Fish swim about freely in water in the same way. But, O Man, it is only you who require a passport to cross this or that boundary. These lines are your own creation. The entire universe was meant for you to move about in. It is you yourself who created these narrow limits and boundaries and thus have fallen from the position of the master of the whole land to a slave of narrow environments. Do not therefore blame your Creator for your own sins.

Right of the sword should come after the right of intellect. Where sword rules there can be no justice.

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Live not in constant fear of Death. It comes only once and it must come; therefore, why worry?

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It gives me greater pleasure to share the sufferings of the poor than to enjoy the peace and plenty of the rich

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Freest people do not seem to me to be free as the birds fluttering around me in the air.

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Try to be a generous giver and not a poor beggar.

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To me every day is a new year day. It always gives me new life and light.

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Great things essential for life are no one man's property and the whole animal and vegetable life is heir to them. They are water, air and sun.

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Greatest Wisdom—application of common-sense to all problems of life.

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Petty men rot in the struggle for their own existence, while great men struggle for the betterment of others. Theirs' is the generous nature.

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Dirtiest manure, if properly used, produces beautiful flowers and sweetest fruits.

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There is no greater sin in the world than ignorance. It is the mother of all evils. Poverty is bad but ignorance is worse.

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28th February

WHERE people belonging to different colours or creeds are destined to live together, mutual love and goodwill, co-operation and co-ordination, help and assistance are very essential for harmonious living. Truth, righteousness and goodness are common to all religions.

Where differences arise, majority opinion may prevail and that majority is honour-bound to protect the just demands of the minority. But where majority is made to bow before a small minority, that is tyranny, that is slavery.

Religion should have nothing to do with our mutual relations. I may have a serious quarrel with a co-religionist but may have at the same time very friendly and cordial relations with a person belonging to a different creed. This often happens.

Those who are spreading hatred and enmity amongst us by raising the cry of 'religion in danger' are notorious mischief-makers and direct or indirect agents of an alien government and not the protectors of this or that religion, as they pose to be.

No religion is in danger. It is the position of its self-styled custodians that may be in danger. Religion should unite and not divide us. Unity means freedom. Disunity prolongs slavery. And the creators of disunity are the agents and instruments of slavery.

In the absence of the Britishers in Malaya, I did not hear of any racial conflicts amongst the Chinese, Malays and Indians. There was complete unity amongst Indians. To-day I hear different reports. This is because external exploitation breeds inner disunity. Wherever an alien people rule, the rulers do their utmost to keep the sons of the soil divided.

We are all sons of mother India. As such we owe her a duty. We must safeguard, protect and defend her from all sorts of exploitation. To do this we must be united. Change of religion does not change our nationality. Whatever religion we may belong to, we remain Indians. We must learn to behave as such.

To be an Indian is much greater than being a mere Hindu, Mohammadan or Sikh. A true Indian ought to be a mixture of all that is best and noblest in different religions.

Nothing appreciable and useful has ever been accomplished without perfect unity. The race lives through perfect unity of two individuals. Man and woman unite to produce one which keeps the race living. Similarly true unity of Hindus and Muslims will produce a true Indian spirit. Unity and harmony of all religions in India will give birth to a new culture, a culture that will make its mark in the world. Only the right approach is essential. A spirit of give and take must prevail.

Time is the best judge. The world to-day is progressing towards bigger unity, but we in India seem to be bent on disintegration. What an unfortunate position we are in! Our future generation will mock at our follies. Let us make a supreme attempt to get out of ignorance and narrow-mindedness. Let us destroy the

seeds of disunity and hatred, but how can that be done?

Wherever men live together, misunderstanding and differences must arise. But they should be cleared and not magnified. We have our share of misunderstanding, doubt and suspicion. We must try to clear them in a calm atmosphere. New blood is necessary to tackle this all important matter. Not because they are more capable than the older people but because they will start without the old prejudices. The prejudices that exist amongst our leaders are one cause why we have so far failed to come together. But above all perfect individual unity is an essential prerequisite for perfect mass unity. Those who preach unity must be able to convince people not by very logical arguments but by actual deeds.

I have my conviction that Hindu-Muslim unity is not a mere dream but something that can be easily achieved provided the right approach is made. I have experimented and succeeded beyond my hopes in the I.N.A. If it could be done there I see no reason why it should fail here. If India cannot achieve freedom as a politically united entity she might as well remain slave.

1st March

FOR the first time, to-day, I had a talk with my wife about the loss of our child. It moved me greatly to notice the sudden change which the memory of that sweet little darling of ours, produced in her. Fate had so ordained that I was not even to see him and this fact never disturbed me till to-day. In fact it mattered nothing to me, but not so with the mother.

A mother's heart is quite a different thing. Men

cannot understand it. There are things which a woman can never forget. I had never realised the enormity of the loss to her till to-day. And four and half years ago what was the effect of the news of the loss of our child on me? It mattered nothing and I celebrated the loss with wine. Shame! What a sense of self-condemnation the memory of that celebration has evoked in me now. How differently I feel and why this sudden change?

It was the deep, silent and abiding love of my wife for our baby, who died four and half years ago, that touched my inner core. The very mention of the name brought instantaneous tears and she became nonplussed almost suddenly. How affectionate and passionate the attachment must have been!

Woman, you are a strange creation indeed! We, men, call you weak and timid, which no doubt you often are. You are at times frightened even to go in your own room, if it is not properly lighted. The sound of a bullet or the thunder of clouds may give you a hysterical fit. But if you love a man you bravely and cheerfully follow him through bursting bombs and shells, heedless about your own safety. The same woman who is frightened at the mere sight of a stranger will become a lioness and fight even 100 men to protect the life of her baby. At that time nothing seems to be impossible for her and what will she not do to save her own honour when that is in danger? But if she falls once she falls very low. Woman, you are a mystery to me! The more I study you the more mysterious and strange you appear to me. God bless you!

4th March

A GURKHA sentry came to lock up my room at 8 to-night. I was sitting in my bed preparing myself for a peaceful dose of my usual eight-hour sleep. The sentry lingered on awhile as if waiting to talk to me. Not a word however came out of him and I closed my eyes again and became absorbed in myself. After a few minutes I was surprised, however, that instead of locking my cell and going away he still stood silent, preparing himself to say something. Then came a horrible sentence from him, which as it fell on my ears, thoroughly shook me and a question asked in a deep and sympathetic tone but which caught me unawares and unprepared.

"Sir, when are you to be hanged?"

What a question to hear in one's cell and at this hour of the night, particularly when one has hopes of thinking of release!

"When all your British Officers who tell you this sort of thing have been hanged," replied I, and this shook the poor simple Gurkha just the same as his question had shaken me.

On further enquiries I understood that as there was double sentry on me and as mine was the only cell to be locked up during the night, this innocent soldier had been told by some mischievous British Officer, that I was the most dangerous person and was to be hanged in the near future.

6th March

UNTOUCHABILITY is the greatest blot on the ancient Indian culture and civilisation. Instead of putting forth arguments to defend our ancestors we

should feel ashamed of untouchability and condemn it and take all practical steps to wipe it out completely.

Mahatma Gandhiji was not the first to realise the dangers of this diseased part of our social structure. Guru Nanak and Guru Gobind Singh also preached against this curse in our otherwise happy land. To-day, if in the north it does not appear in all its ugly colours, it is due to the effect of the teachings of the Great Gurus. Mahatmaji has succeeded in creating a very strong public opinion against it and has awakened us to the fact that the perpetuation of untouchability is the greatest sin that we are committing to-day. But this is not enough. We should eradicate it completely. For this drastic steps must be taken at the first available opportunity and we must not rest till the last vestige of this disease disappears from this ancient land of ours.

If to-day we suffer at the hands of Europeans who treat us as 'dirty niggers' it is because of our own sins. In vain do we blame the Europeans for their racial superiority complex. If we can treat our own kith and kin as if they were 'dirty dogs' why should not the Europeans mete out to us the same treatment? To-day we Indians are all 'Harijans' in our own country; only the English and their satellites, the Rajas and the Nawabs, are the Brahmans. If we had given a square deal to our brothers, victims of a most unreasonable and shameless social system, we would have faced the world as befit the greatest civilisers the world has ever known, and General Smuts and his like would not have dared insult our national honour. To-day, the treatment meted out to us in South Africa pains us and if we had

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the required force behind us we would not have hesitated to declare war on South Africa in order to retrieve our national honour. But we pay little or no heed to those Ghetto Acts of our social structure which condemn millions of our brothers to the status of slaves for ever! Let us all become one and let us do all that in us lies towards that end. It is still not too late.

7th March

THE cry for Pakistan has risen to stupendous heights. In 1941, when I left India, it was considered something unreal and merely a 'stage trick' to bargain for political rights, not for the Muslim masses but for the vested Muslim interests. To-day when I read the papers I am surprised. It has become something real and a very live issue. What has transpired in the intervening period? I fail to understand what has contributed to its becoming a real issue.

Are the propounders of Pakistan really sincere in their demand? From the look of things, they are bent on achieving their goal, but from closer scrutiny, I think it is still a bargaining stunt. The strength behind it is vested Muslim interests, who are stooges in the hands of British imperialism.

I am a soldier and I see things not through Congress, Akali or League glasses but only from the point of view of a soldier and of an Indian soldier at that. The main principle of fighting lies in dividing the strength of the enemy and striking first one and then the other, eventually crushing both. In India, the British have mainly relied on this principle and have achieved amazing success. In other words, they

have hoodwinked us and have succeeded in dividing India into two water-tight compartments. By remaining divided both the compartments are at the mercy of the common enemy (Britain) but by uniting they can easily defeat him. It is up to our leaders to choose between the two—unity or disintegration ; the former good for both, the latter injurious to both.

Pakistan, from what little I have studied of it, does in no way solve the minority problem which it claims to ; on the other hand it accentuates it. In the so-called Pakistan Areas, the Muslims have a bare majority and if the Muslims in India do not like to submit to majority rule how can it be possible for other communities to submit to Muslim domination ? If the Muslims apprehend Hindu domination in the predominantly Hindu areas, other minorities in the Muslim areas will suffer from the same disease. Therefore division is no solution. It is only by creating religious and social harmony that we can bring about unity. We should not magnify and increase the existing doubts and misunderstandings but must make all efforts to diminish them by tackling the problem in a real and sincere manner.

We all suffer at the hands of vested interests, whether they be British, Hindu or Muslim. There is very little to choose between a Hindu Rajah and a Muslim Nawab. Both flourish on the exploitation of the masses. In the same way there is little to choose between a Hindu bania and a Muslim landlord. Both suck the blood of the poor without any remorse. The fight today is between Hindu and Muslim vested interests, and it has unfortunately been given the colour of a struggle between Hindus and Muslims.

This of course suits the vested interests in both the camps, who are exploiting our religious sentiments in order to achieve their own selfish ends.

If we want to live peacefully and wish to build a New India based on real equality we shall have to stand together and fight all vested interests. It is my earnest desire and hope to see a united India built with the willing co-operation of all who live in it. But a disease which has taken years to grow and which has become dangerous requires very delicate and expert attention to root it out. Is India capable of producing such a doctor? Surely the need of a Mustafa Kamal in India was never greater than it is today!

13th March

COL. Burhan-ud-din, the pride of Chitral and a brave son of India, had already received seven years' rigorous imprisonment. His punishment had made Shangara and Fateh Khan very pessimistic. They feared that although no charges against them had been proved by the notorious prosecution agents, the precedent of punishment had been set and it would be impossible for them to escape. They quietly awaited the day of award.

At last the long awaited day came. This morning they have been removed from here to an unknown destination. 14 years! Half a lifetime! And now, O you 'big guns,' sitting in the Army Headquarters and occupying high Government positions, be happy and celebrate! Laugh to your hearts' content! Nothing short of the devil's laughter it would be. Tonight when these two brave soldiers of India's battle

of freedom are locked up in cells, many drink parties will begin in most of the British messes. And all this in our own country !

But, O you arrogant, befooled, blinded and conceited foreign instruments of a satanic system of slavery, go steady with your drinks. These soldiers of India's freedom will get out sooner than your drink-muddled brain can think of.

14th March.

A STAGE has come in our country when no one can keep us slaves, but we ought to remember that we have a duty which we have to discharge as soon as we achieve independence.

Free India ought to be a great source of inspiration for all subjugated people who are struggling to attain freedom. It is her moral obligation to extend all practical help to such countries as are now fighting foreign domination and exploitation and as were enslaved once directly or indirectly with the assistance of Indian men or material.

Where slave India sent one man to enforce slavery, free India now ought to send two to assist them in getting freedom.

What is good for one country should also be considered good for others. When once free ourselves, we must work for the freedom of the world, the freedom of mankind.

The duty of championing the cause of the weaker nations will inevitably fall on our shoulders and we will have to play our part most honourably. India should set an example to the world. But in order to do this we must be strong. Moral force should be

backed by physical force. The happy combination of both of these will ensure us our rightful place in world politics. By rightful position I do not mean what the Germans and other big powers meant by it. We should not make the mistakes which our forefathers made, we should be peaceful but not weak and we should never remain a helpless prey for fresh aggression. We have learnt what it means to be slaves.

16th March

JAIL life has few pleasures and one of them is reading. Since I was brought to Delhi, there has been no dearth of good and interesting books and I enjoy reading them. But it was not so in my long confinement in the East. Here I get practically all the newspapers that I may want to read. Newspapers go a long way in keeping one well informed of the day to day events of the world. But I must confess that reading has one defect. Most of us borrow our opinions from the books and newspapers we read. We merely become the rubber-stamps of certain authors and certain newspapers. This hampers the growth of our independent thinking.

It would not be so bad if one read good authors or the opinions of newspaper editors who give a true version of events. But unfortunately most newspaper editors, however sincere they may be in their effort to give only the truth to the public, are forced to follow a definite policy chalked out for them by their directors, who run the paper in their own interest. This practice is very very harmful to the body-politic of any country, not to speak of a subject country like ours.

This war must have opened many peoples' eyes to this malpractice. The radio, newspapers, cinemas and

other vehicles of thought were all marshalled to give to the public, only what the 'HIGH UPS' ordered. Anyone who dared to go against these orders must have suffered terribly. This was the same in all warring countries, more marked and thorough of course in the Axis or Axis-occupied territories.

The British were the first to realise the importance of newspapers and they made full use of them. The opinions expressed in the editorials are so deep and subtle that it is only after being caught in their clutches that one realises their poisonous effect. Fortunately from my childhood I had been brought up not to trust the British and never believed the contention of British papers that Britain was a pious nation, out to defend the rights of minorities and always prepared to fight for freedom and democracy. Today, after having gone through the mill and having seen things for myself, I laugh at these altruistic opinions expressed in the columns of most British newspapers.

In India most of us know the truth and we no longer are befooled. But there is a certain portion who cling to the British, expecting them to do justice. The English and justice are two incompatible things! Yes, they can do justice, if it is not against their own interests. My Muslim League friends and some of my Akali brothers still pin hope on the British. I can assure them that they are in for a very big disappointment. The British will only do what is in their own interests.

In India, the British proclaim that they must protect the rights of minorities, *viz.*, the Muslims. But what are they doing in Egypt and other Muslim countries? Indonesia is the latest on the British list. There they

are defending the rights of another minority—the Dutch! How long will this go on?

My friend, try to think for yourself, follow your own conscience, have an independent view on life and do not become a slave of an author or a newspaper. You are the author of your own book of life.

18th March

DURAN has also been taken away. He has been awarded seven years. This Gurkha officer was one of my very first companions who fought very bravely by my side. He and his other colleagues have proved to the world that the barriers that have been built by the British to rob India of her very brave fighting men are but artificial. They can be removed in no time and Gurkhas, in spite of British efforts, will remain the pride of the Indian Army.

I am very anxious about the fate of the Gurkhas and will do everything possible to keep them with ourselves. Born soldiers as they are, they make the most reliable comrades in war. The term "Sathi" in the army is used for the Gurkhas only. Wherever they have gone they have earned a very good reputation for themselves. Their fault is their illiteracy and if they once understand a thing nothing can change them. The part played by the Gurkhas in the I. N. A. is something to be proud of.

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I have been shifted tonight to the new cells. They are too small but far bigger than those in Singapore.

Barbed wire fencing is too near the rooms and there is no open view. This narrowness of external views depresses my inward spirit and I feel dejected. I must shake off this feeling of dejection. There is one consolation here that I shall not be locked up during nights.

20th March

SARDAR Kapoor Singh came to see me yesterday.

This time we could not talk as much as we did during his previous visit.

Mr. Dharam Vir visited me for the first time. We had a formal talk about Rattan. A telegram was arranged to be sent to him.

Last evening I was feeling very sad, dejected and ill at ease. The general feeling of depression which hung over me, cannot be precisely described. I think it is in one of these dark moments of life that some people resort to suicide. I was in a very strange sort of mood. Nothing interested me and I felt wholly deserted and forsaken. I kept on walking mechanically up and down for hours. Then sleep came to my rescue. What a beautiful remedy for our physical and mental ills!

This morning I rejoice to note that I feel happy once again. And what is more—I am happy to be alone.

We must stick on and never lose hope. There comes a stage when the very pains turn into pleasure.

21st March

JASWANT and Nimboo were taken away yesterday.

I also received the farewell message and Jai Hind from Shangara and Fateh Khan. Now, just five minutes ago, I received the same message from Nimboo. He has been awarded one year.

28th March

HARDLY ten yards from my cage, some Gurkha soldiers are being trained in what is known in the Indian Army as 'aid to civil power.' This training

pertains to internal security and instructs troops in the handling of civil riots.

Now that they (the British) have finished with Japan and Germany, they continue the training to crush those with whose help they crushed their former foes.

In our own country, with our men, our money and our weapons, we are being trained to crush ourselves. Two British officers are the instructors. Sheer waste!

No more of this now. This is not going to work. This very weapon which you (British) are sharpening for our destruction is going to destroy you. Better understand the signs of Time.

Aid to Civil Power! Instrument to crush Civil Liberties, is the most befitting name.

29th March

I STAND for United India because :—

Unity means sure freedom, peace and prosperity and division means eternal slavery, disorder and sure ruin.

United India can never be slave and divided India can never be free.

We were crushed, defeated and enslaved because we were divided. We can rise and get freedom only if we are united.

Which is a great thing: A strong, united, one India or many small, weak Indias?

Unity is the key not only to freedom but a sure guarantee for future dangers.

Unity is a means to end slavery and disunity is a means to prolong slavery; therefore all lovers of

freedom must work for the unity of our beloved country.

1st April

REPENTANCE! Repentance! What a waste of fifteen years, the most precious and the best part of my life. For the last ten days I have been thinking of the long and hard years of my Army career. How much I had to struggle to rise from a private soldier to the rank of a Commissioned Officer? How proud, glorified and dignified I felt when I joined the Indian Military Academy as one of the pioneers in 1932! I considered it a great honour and a matter of deep satisfaction for me to belong to the very first batch of cadets of that great Military Institution of India.

That enthusiasm of mine, however, did not take long to cool down as I saw a little more of the ways and modes of the life of army officers, their arrogant, conceited and snobbish manners, their swank and swagger, and, worst of all, their debauchery in which most of the officers indulged so freely and proudly, I got disgusted and became unhappy. To those officers, woman and wine, was the most important part of their profession. I became discontented. Life would have become absolutely intolerable had there not been some very decent officers, although their number was very small. In spite of disgust and inner revolt I quietly dragged on without making any serious fuss about that—in fact I too joined in their 'fun and frolics' knowing fully well that it did not go well with me.

Today, after a gap of three years spent in solitary confinement, how differently I feel—what a waste of energy those 15 years of my army life appear to me!

The whole thing looks dark. The only bright spot of my entire military career is its closing chapter. Perhaps that may compensate for the whole loss.

Then why should I repent? Buck up and be cheerful, Oh you little man, and remember:—

“To mourn a mischief that is past and gone,
Is the next way to draw a new mischief on”.

We seem to be nothing but mere puppets in the hands of some supreme power. In whatever circumstances we are placed we should try to act our part well and remain sincere to ourselves.

“Honour and shame from no condition rise
Act well thy part, there all the honour lies”.

—Pope.

2nd April

GOOD HEALTH—good appetite—natural regular evacuation of bowels and 8-hour daily sound sleep.

No medicine can give us what we take by adhering to the following:—

(a) Plenty of time spent in the open air and sunshine.

(b) Eating very simple and light food and taking nothing between the meals.

(c) A full dose of sound sleep and regular hours of going to bed.

(d) Regular movements of the bowels at fixed times twice a day.

(e) Keeping the brain clear from all burdens and worries by taking life as it comes.

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The use of watch has become so universal that

we have lost our natural time sense. As by using digestive medicines we ruin our digestive organs, similarly by over-using the watch, and in certain cases making use of it without any necessity, we have ruined our natural time sense.

I am not against the use of a watch. Let us keep it by all means but use it only when we cannot help and if it is really necessary. It is an instrument of special use and should be used as such.

Take a warning and do not ruin your God-given natural time sense. Let the sun, moon and stars be your time-keepers. Let the effect of the climatic variations of the day warn you about the time of the day. Your stomach will tell you accurately when it is meals time, only you must trust it. This reminds me of Mr. K. P. K. Menon who used to say that his stomach clock was most accurate. At meals time he could tell us the time correct to a minute. When I was confined at Pulau Ubin (a small island near Singapore) we had a few chickens and used to feed them at regular hours. After a time all the chickens would gather everyday at the feeding place punctual to a second.

The watch is a very useful instrument but we keep on worrying so much about time that we waste more time in thinking about time itself. Let time not worry you. Let it run its own course. Take no notice of it; it does not take any notice of you.

Live close to nature. You can learn much from birds and beasts. Let the melodious music and the sweet songs of the birds wake you up in the morning. By then you should have had your full dose of sleep and you should jump out of your bed to join the sing-

ing birds to welcome the rising sun, the great sun which gives life to this little world of ours.

If you want to be great, associate yourself with great things. Become part of them. Let the rising sun, with all its morning beauty and glory, be your great friend. The inspiration drawn from him will be greater than the greatest things of the world. He is THE LIFE. This great sun is ever prepared to serve you as your great watch. Discard him not in preference to an insignificant piece of machinery. Your watch may stop, break or may run slow or fast but the great time-keeper of the world will ever be punctual and will never stop or break, for if ever it does, rest assured you, too, will not be there.

Let the joyful evening songs of fluttering birds returning home be a signal for you to return to your home, to the warmth of that cosy nest where your wife and children are waiting for you. Cut off from the noisy world and spend the night in peace and in the sweet company in your little nest.

Do not plunge and drown yourself in the 'night world.' Night is meant for night birds and night beasts—you are a day bird. Do not violate nature—it will wreak vengeance.

Birds and beasts are in certain cases more intelligent than we are. Let us learn from them and follow them in things in which they are our betters. We shall certainly profit by that.

There are times when our life becomes such that duty demands that every minute of our day be carefully divided. But just sometimes, whenever it is possible, forget about time and experience the inner calm. When you go out to the country for a health

trip discard the use of the watch for just a few days.

You cannot enjoy full health till you have discarded the use of all medicines; you cannot enjoy mental peace till you discard the use of the watch.

In Pearl Hell prison a watch was not allowed and I experienced something new. For the first few days I felt that I was missing something but soon I got used to it and regained my lost sense of time. I was reminded of my school days when I was living at a place which could not boast of a watch or a clock, but I never got late to school. In the ranks, too, I could not afford to have a watch but I was always punctual. When I became an officer and possessed at least two watches, it was only then that I was sometimes late. I had started to depend on something and it let me down several times. Therefore do not always depend on this tiny machinery but dash on joyfully like a bird and let time follow you and adjust itself with you.

Now, once again, my watch lies packed up in my box and I feel a burden off my brain and feel much happier. I laugh at my own foolishness in sticking so obstinately to a tiny piece of machinery all these years and not taking any notice of the sun, the moon and the stars.

3rd April

TODAY Pandit Jawahar Lal, Sardar Patel and Saran ji came to see us.

People travel thousands of miles to meet these great personalities, the pride of India. And lo, they themselves travel to see us! Would they have come if we were not detained here? Everything has something sweet in it.

It was the first time that I met Sardar Patel. I had heard quite a lot about him and several friends had told me that I must meet him. Today, however, he came in connection with the latest court-martial, said to be the last. He did not speak much but left a very good impression upon me. He seems to be a quiet but deep and strong man and very sure of himself. I hope to have more chances to study him more closely.

Panditji looked very very fresh and cheerful and was overflowing with love and sympathy - a contrast with his last visit.

Saran ji visits us so often that we are apt not to take a very serious notice of him. This is the common weakness of human nature that we value little what we can get cheaply and with ease.

This little man, who does not like to come to the forefront but who always prefers to sit on the back benches, is so affectionate, kind and charming a person that I often wonder at the greatness hidden in the obvious slightness of his form. He is very sympathetic and is always ready to help those who may need it. He always remains cheerful and I have yet to see him in a bad mood.

Whenever he visits us, which he does so often, he makes it a point to see me and it gives me great pleasure to spend a few moments with this unassuming personality.

His visits and visits of other kind friends in my dark and helpless days make me feel that the world is not bereft of good and noble souls. They encourage me so much that I feel stronger day by day. Only a man in my position can realise the value of sincere sympathy and I am really grateful to these people who

give without any expectation of return. I am in no position to return but I can and I must pray to God to bless these kind and noble souls.

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A letter is already gone requesting Rattan* to make up his mind. I feel he will come. Yet if he decides to take up a different line, it will worry me not.

Letter to Rattan

My dear Rattanji,

JAI HIND. Received your letter. Have also been told about your activities by C. B. Thanks.

Never think that I have forgotten you. What I have been doing so far, can only be talked about when we meet

I am pleased to know about your present job.

If you have a desire for service then please do not leave it. Stick to it, till arrangements for another job have been made.

Should you desire to take the medical line, then say so. I will make the necessary arrangements. But

* Mr. Rattan Singh Chohan was a civilian gentleman in Malaya with whom General Mohan Singh, much before the start of war in Asia, had very friendly and intimate relations. He joined General Sahib during the Malayan campaign and became very closely associated with him. He was his A.D.C, and when General Mohan Singh was arrested by the Japanese, Mr. Rattan Singh went with him. He remained his faithful friend and companion till Nov. 1945 when General Sahib was brought to Red Fort. Mr. Rattan Singh remained in the Pearl Hell prison and on his release was working in Singapore.

As expected by General Sahib, he has come and is now with him. We asked him if he had in his possession the letter which General Sahib had sent him. Fortunately he had, and with his kind permission we reproduce it. (Publishers)

after all your medical education, you may not get as good a salary as you are getting at present. Please think it over.

There is still another way open for you and that is far more difficult. If you strongly feel to remain with me and take the road of life together with me, you are always welcome. Just make up your mind. Be sincere to yourself.

If your conscience strongly directs you to take the last suggested line, then come. Waste no more time. Meet me at your earliest convenience.

My pleasure is in your pleasure. But I must confess that having lived together and having enjoyed the hidden pleasure of sufferings together for a few years it is a little difficult to part now.

Wherever you live, and however distant you may be from me, I always find you so near. You are my second self. It is only due to the inherent weakness of human nature that I am inclined to wish that the WHOLE should be together. But if it is so destined that I should be here, there, somewhere or nowhere I cheerfully accept it.

It would be a difficult dicision for you. Resolve. The path that I am contemplating to take is rather a difficult one. It is a path of finding pleasure in pain and discarding all in order to be the master of all. I cannot even explain it.

I am, at present, confined in a small barbed-wire cage. A Gurkha sentry is always watching me. Others are confined in a bigger cage, the cage constructed with the barbed wires of sensuous desires and the relentless eyes of their own conscience are ever watching them.

We are all prisoners.

In this little cell of mine I am enjoying more freedom than I ever experienced before. I smile at my captor, even pity him. He is the real prisoner. The poor Gurkha sentry is the prisoner, while I am enjoying freedom.

I want to achieve complete freedom. I want to kill my little self in order to become SELF itself.

And now :—

How is Iqbal ? I have heard about his activities. It is all very sweet of him. I have much to talk to him and yet more to hear from him. What about Pohlo and Tambi ? Tell them not to worry about anything.

Convey my best wishes to Sardar Teja Singh, Rahman, Pandit and my other friends.

If nothing has yet been decided about your matrimonial affair, then please wait.

It is twice a week that I meet my wife and other friends. Everyone is sweet and kind to me. It is more than I deserve.

With best wishes,

Yours
Mohan Singh.

4th April

FOUR things are necessary for life :—

Air

Water

Sun

Food

Of all these four, food is the least important. Air, water and sun being so vital to life, God did not

entrust them to the control of Man, who is selfish by nature and would not have hesitated to end all life for his own selfish ends.

We suffer in health and run after doctors because we make too much use of food and too little use of air, water and sun. We have not yet learnt to appreciate the full value of air, water and sun.

A farmer leads a very healthy life because he makes full use of nature's bounties, although he eats very simple food. He thrives on plain bread taken with salt or chillies alone. He, by spending only five to ten rupees a month on his food, is far stronger and healthier than those who spend hundreds of rupees but do not make full use of those vital foods which are controlled by God Himself.

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My parents were taken away from me at an early age, by a power whose authority no living being can question. My wife was taken away from her parents at a tender age by an affectionate mutual understanding of all concerned. We have been both brought up by our near relatives, who considered us their own children. Circumstances brought us close to each other and we were united quite unexpectedly. There was something common in us and although I was not sure at the time of my marriage, today, I am very much sure and I am thankful to God for having a companion I can always be proud of, and I hope to make up for my past carelessness as soon as I am in a position to do so.

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Aid to Civil Power. Once again they are practising

the same old thing but the Gurkha soldiers are taking it as a game and are not interested in it. A soldier who resorts to violence and use of destructive weapons on unarmed and non-violent peaceful people, is a first-class coward. He is no soldier.

5th April

LAST night at about 8 p.m. Mahatmaji, accompanied by Sardar Patelji and Regunandan Saranji, came to see me.

Every dark side of a picture must have its bright side as well. The dull and monotonous life of detention is not without its sweet fruits. This great soul of India, to see whom people travel thousands of miles from all over the world, did us a great honour to come and see us here. How kind of him!

He was in very good health and impressed me as the incarnation of truth itself. He wanted to know my reasons for wanting to live a separate and lonely life.

When he had just left I asked the Gurkha sentry if he knew who the visitor was. His reply was "Hindustan ka bara Raja" (The great Raja of India). I then requested him to explain it a little in detail. The simple Gurkha gave me a lengthy explanation in his broken Hindustani. To put it briefly it meant this. The visitor was the Raja of the Congress. The English were leaving India after making him the Raja of India. The English, according to him, were very afraid of this man.

I became interested in his point of view and being in a humorous mood asked him "Does the Raja of Nepal also wear nothing but a loin-cloth? Whom do you think the bigger of the two?"

His reply was that the Maharaja of Nepal was a different kind of Maharaja; therefore his dress was also different. This Raja (Mahatmaji), according to him, was bigger than any other Raja of this world.

We talked for a little while and he assured me that if any English officer ordered him to fire at this Raja of ours he would fire at the officer instead.

What a befitting Raja for a poor country, such as India now is!

7th April

TODAY I was suffering from a bad cold and was lying in my bed when at about 9 a.m. I was informed by Major Adams to dress up as some important visitors were coming to see me in my cell. He could not precisely define the word important. However I began to dress myself quietly and began to guess who those important visitors could be. As no visitors are allowed to come and meet us in our cells I thought that these important personages must be some officials, most probably some big guns from the Army Headquarters.

I had hardly dressed myself when I heard footsteps approaching my cell. I opened the door and whom did I see? It was Master Tara Singh, the great Sikh leader, accompanied by Babu Labh Singh, Jathedar Sohan Singh, S. Amar Singh and S. Sardul Singh and an English Colonel standing in front of my cell. The English Colonel took leave of Master Tara Singhji and the party entered my cell.

They remained with me for about three hours. I did most of the talking and related to them the real story of the I.N.A. Nothing about current politics was

discussed. Time flew very rapidly. They left an impression of real concern for me and were really sympathetic.

9th April

SARDAR Partap Singh, general secretary of the Punjab Provincial Congress Committee, came to see me today.

He has impressed me as a very sound, kind and good-hearted person, who readily understands and can see things from another's point of view. He possesses an abundance of common-sense which I think is the wisdom of all wisdoms.

I liked to be in his company and feel there is something common in us.

I requested him to send me some good book, particularly 'The Discovery of India' by our Jawahar Lal.

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My friends, Shah Nawaz and Sehgal, the great heroes of the I.N.A. trials, came to see us. They both seemed to be in good spirits. I could not talk much with them.

Shah Nawaz seems to be shaping very well.

12th April

I have been suffering from a bad cold for about a week. Could not read even newspapers properly.

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The visitors' time is now changed to 4-6 p.m. The days remain the same, i.e., Tuesdays and Fridays.

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It was my great desire to meet my friend and colleague Bhagat who very kindly came today. He has suffered quite a lot for being too straight, honest and frank for this crooked world. I wonder how many have heard anything about such a brave, sincere and true son of our country. He came to the movement (INA) a little late, but when he did come in he came with a soldierly and purely patriotic desire of giving all and sacrificing all in the service of the cause and without any selfish desire of seeing how the movement could serve him.

Although he was my classmate for 1½ years in the Indian Military Academy, yet being in different companies, we were not very intimate. In spite of that, I must admit that I admired him secretly for his soldierly dash and spirit, for his sincere, frank and to an extent blunt ways and, above all, for his intelligence and intellect.*

In the movement when I took him as my military secretary I had a chance to study him more thoroughly. It was then that he became my most trusted friend. He stood by me during the crisis in a brave and fearless manner.

He has suffered much for possessing the noble quality of having the courage of his convictions. He blurts out the bitter truth and only acts as he thinks it right. Unfortunately this quality is not much in demand, and this soldier of India remains in oblivion although he is one of those who deserve the special attention of the country.

Dear Bhagat, few know and appreciate you, but those who know you will always stick to you.

*He topped the list in the final examination.

15th April

I HAVE been in India for nearly five months. Although the whole of this period I have spent in prison, it has yet been a matter of great satisfaction and contentment for me. For me to remain in a prison in the land of my birth is better than to live a free life outside India. Why? I cannot give a satisfactory answer, because it is a question of feeling, and there seems to be no logic about sentiments.

Probably it is due to the fact that my body is composed entirely of Indian soil and has an Indian soul in it and therefore has natural connection with India. In the Singapore jail I was most anxious to get to India and when I was told that I should be taken thither in a day or so, my comrades of the jail congratulated me and said I was a lucky man—I agreed with them. I recollect vividly the words of the pilot of our plane as we crossed the Indo-Burma border, "Gentlemen, we are now flying over Indian soil."

The magical effect produced by these words cannot be accurately or precisely described. It can only be felt, and the effect on me was probably more because I had, at one time, lost all hope of returning to India. All that I can remember is that a queer sort of pleasant tingling sensation pervaded my entire being; and finally when I was landed in India, I heaved a sigh of relief and said to myself: "At long last I am in India, my beloved home and the home of my ancestors. I shall be quite happy to die here in the knowledge that my body would remain for ever a part of India." How happy I felt!

I was too eager to learn of the happenings in India and anxious to resume the thread of news from

India which had snapped for me in 1941. I devoured all papers and was particularly interested in events of which I had known nothing. This eagerness was damped after a while and the state of happiness did not last long.

My connecting link with the outside world were the newspapers that I read. Every day in some form or the other there was the cry and demand for the vivisection of India. For a time I refused to believe my own eyes and began to enquire from those who came to visit me. Oh ! how it cut me ! I, who stood for a united India outside India, fought for its honour in my own little way, sacrificed thousands of sons of India, Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims for her sake, how can I bear the pain when people talk of dividing India ?

Oh, my countrymen, please let reason govern you and let not passions waste our energies. Just see what is happening in the outside world. Look where the world is moving to and if we cannot think for ourselves, let the sound opinion of the rest of the world guide us. There is no shame in it. There comes a time when the most intelligent amongst us cannot think rightly.

We all know that, today, the more sensible amongst mankind are thinking in terms of unity, equality and brotherhood of the entire mankind and are working ceaselessly to attain that aim. Everywhere in the world the general opinion is that all nations must unite and a super-state must be constituted to guide the destinies of the human race, but in India we are preparing to divide amongst ourselves and thus destroy India, that India on which will rest the future peace and unity of the whole world.

Friends, we were enslaved because we were not united and we can never retain freedom if we remain divided. To me unity is most important. Without it freedom will have lost all its value. The only good that has come out of the 200 years of slavery is the political unity that exists today. Let us not destroy this; we have paid very dearly for it.

India is not the private property of a few individuals so that they can do what they like with it. She was not and cannot be divided. She is the homeland of all those who consider her their home, irrespective of caste or creed, and will remain an open home for all foreigners who choose to come to her and live and work in India as sons of the soil.

If a few individuals have got a notion in their heads that India must be divided, they should bear in mind that there are many more who say it must not be divided.

Those who are anxious to fight, let them remember that there is a very big field for them. We have in our midst a common enemy, who has successfully contrived to divide us and who has spent all his energy to see that we remain divided. The plague is in our midst and seems to flourish and the rats carrying this disease must be killed but let us not burn our house to kill those rats. There is another remedy and that is unity.

We all, Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs, are caught in a net. Let us not unnecessarily flutter and pull in different directions thereby making entanglement still more serious. There is only one way to get out of it —pull in unison, and we shall even carry away the net with ourselves.

If there was ever a noble cause to fight for, it is

the unity of India. Let us sink our past differences and unite to build an India of our dreams. We may have to fight and kill our own brothers in this struggle but let not that deter us—it is something worth fighting and dying for. Let me make it quite clear that we should fight only to maintain unity in India and should not play in the hands of Hindu or Muslim capitalists.

16th April.

I HAVE started taking life in a very easy manner and I find it is doing me a tremendous amount of good. I do not hurry now as I used to do before. After all why should I hurry, I who am nothing but an infinitesimal, tiny, little speck of life when the whole nature goes on steadily?

I work only when I feel like working. For days I am so busy as if I were preparing for an examination. For days I am lazy doing absolutely nothing. Sometimes I watch life and activity going around me and at times I retire completely within my own self.

This is a strange experience which reminds me of my childhood when I used to sit for hours together in the grassy fields all alone, building castles in the air and thinking of things never to come to pass. Happy were those days which did not look happy then. But now I feel happy when I feel and behave like a child. Whenever I am in such a mood, I also sleep like a child. Strange!

Doing nothing has also become a part of my life. It is, in a way, either a preparation for the work to follow or a reaction of previous work. Activity and passivity are inter-connected as life and death, day and night.

As storms, rain and sunshine are reflections of moods of nature, in the same way happiness and sadness are the reflections of our moods. When I am free from inner turmoil, it is only then that I see everything beautiful and pure around me. But if the external objects around me appear dim and dismal, there is something wrong about me. In order to see the whole of an object I must keep on moving, putting myself in this or that position, and sometimes imagine myself to be the actual object. A fixed vision, unless the object looked at is moving, will only show one side.

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An inner change is coming on me and inner changes will continue as long as I live. Who knows one day I might achieve a calm tranquil equilibrium of mind? If I cannot achieve this now I must not fret, for waves and storms come over even the deepest waters, and high mountains suffer at the hands of terrific storms.

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The only outward change in my life here is the visiting days.

Every Tuesday and Friday, my wife and Mrs. Hardial come. What patient, untiring, and affectionate creatures these women are!

Sometimes some kind relatives and friends visit me too. The world is full of sweet and good people. And what else? Every day I wait most anxiously for my dear friend the 'Hindustan Times' which keeps on telling me silently—"Wake up and shake yourself and move on. It is only you who are sitting still.

Look what is happening in the world. The world moves on. Things wait for no one. No one is, and never was, indispensable."

Another change is an occasional letter. Letters sometimes interest me, sometimes amuse me, but never upset me.

Piara has written to me a few letters. My interest in him is aroused. I find good raw material in him, which might turn out in the end fine finished material. He needs good guidance.

I am not prompt in replying to letters and am really not sorry for this habit, although I am apt to feel that due to this habit I lose several friends. The fact is they are not my friends ; it is my vision that is wrong. I look back to my past, I know of friends whom I have never written a line. How often I remember them and how I long to meet them and talk to them ! They always remain in my memory. On the other hand several companions of my younger days, with whom I had regular exchange of letters, have now all gone out of my mind.

At times I have taken weeks, several months and even a year to reply to a friend. The longer I take to reply to a friend, the longer the idea of writing to him remains with me and the more I remain in the company of my friend. Once the reply is gone the text of his letter is also gone out of me and the following day my own reply is also forgotten. There is hardly anything good, which having read once, I have not read twice. The same applies to a letter. But once it is replied to, it is finished with.

I should write only when urged to do so by an inner force. Outer Mohan Singh and inner Mohan Singh are two different beings in me. When the inner one does a thing it is far superior to anything done by the outer one. When both are in harmony, ideas flow out of me as if from a sweet fresh spring. Everything around

me becomes lovely and beautiful. I myself become the symbol of beauty and love. But this happens rarely.

Inner Mohan Singh is not a wicked and ugly person like its outer self and whenever it cares to speak, it is soft and tender in tone but true and brave in action.

It is a matter of shame that I have utilised this beautiful inner self for the services of the ugly and wicked outer Mohan Singh. Although it continued service, it always warned me and at last revolted. Luckily, today, the process is being reversed.

The voice of one's conscience is the voice of Truth and Goodness. It is worth while ignoring a thousand outer voices to be able to listen to the inner one.

17th April-

RAJUJI* in whom I discovered a silent, sweet and selfless worker and whose valuable services to the I. N. A. will ever remain fresh in my memory from whom emanated love, truth, humility and unselfishness and who inspired and urged me to follow the truth, asked me to give him a message. I felt

* Col. D.S. Raju, a very eminent member of the I.N.A. hails from Andhra Desha (Madras Presidency). He was personal physician and adviser to General Mohan Singh and also personal physician to Taneja besides holding several other appointments in the Provisional Azad Hind Government. General Mohan Singh has very high regard for him and thinks him to be one of the most selfless workers that he has come across. With his very kind permission we publish the text of the message which General Mohan Singh gave him. (Publishers)

very small, and what message could I give to an angel like him? Not to hurt him I gave him something but with the sure knowledge that I was incompetent for the task. Here is the message:—

My dear Friend,

I can give only that much to my friends and associates which emanates from me, which comes out of me silently through my actions and not what I may try to give. However, I send the following few lines as a voice of my conscience to a kind friend and not with an air of any message in it.

Any people fit to be free cannot be kept in bondage for long. We, normally, get what we deserve.

To yield silently to injustice and slavery is, in a way, to assist injustice and slavery in the world. A follower of Truth must learn to revolt against evil and sin.

Past, present and future are inseparably connected. Our present plight is the result of our past actions. Future depends upon our present efforts.

Nature has given to Indians all that a man requires. We are inferior to NONE. Why, then, are we slaves today? Our slavery is not the cause but effect of certain ills and evils rooted within us. Our outer plight is due to our inner decay.

I am certain we are going to be free soon. But to retain freedom for ever we must eradicate those causes which brought us our present slavery.

We must purify ourselves.

A healthy nation should be like a running stream, ever fresh and ever moving on and on, adjusting itself to the lie of the land, to the great ocean of progress and prosperity, Truth, Justice and Righteousness. We Indians had become a stagnant pool.

Healthy nations can only be built through healthy institutions. Therefore, friend, get ready to work. You will always find me by your side whenever you require my services. Our real work begins from now.

Let us dedicate ourselves to improve the lot of our poor masses. Service to humanity is the only worship of God. Rest is all bunkum.

Your friend,
Mohan Singh.

17.4.46

17th April.

THE Cabinet Mission comprising Lord Pethick-Lawrence, Sir Stafford Cripps and Mr. A. V. Alexander, sent out by His Majesty's Labour Government has been here since 24th March. They have come "with the intention of using their utmost endeavours to help her (India) to attain her freedom as speedily and fully as possible."

Mahatma Ghandiji and most leaders of India have welcomed this Mission with open arms. This is the first time that popular leaders have welcomed a British Mission to settle their affairs. However ridiculous it may appear, it is a fact. I fail to understand what has brought about this mental change in our leaders.

It is their business and they understand it better but a lay man like myself is perplexed. Since the arrival of the Mission I have been going through the papers more minutely than I ever did before, and yet I have not found one concrete reason to trust the Mission as we are asked to do by our accredited leaders.

I think there is something wrong with my mental make-up. It must be, otherwise I should see eye to

eye with our leaders. Probably I am not a politician and do not therefore understand the true political problems of India. But, with all the humility and respect due to my leaders, I feel in my heart of hearts that the attitude adopted by our leaders is wrong somewhere.

I feel it an insult to India, and more especially to her brilliant leaders, that they have accepted and welcomed the self-appointment of our enemy as an arbitrator to settle our internal differences. Although their professed aim is to give us independence, yet they say they are out to bring a peaceful settlement amongst Indians.

Simple common-sense will tell us that an enemy, who has taken so much pains to divide us, will never try to unite us. He may, realising that there is a chance for us to unite, profess solicitude to settle our differences, but rest assured he will see to it that we remain divided eternally. If after knowing the British for over two hundred years, we are not able to see through the British game, then what hope can there be? Study history and do not merely read it—the British game will appear transparent.

Our answer to the Cabinet Mission should have been the same which we gave on August 9, 1942—“QUIT INDIA.” The sacrifice of thousands of young men and women has gone in vain. Let us not mince matters. I don't believe in doing so. Those brave boys and girls have been betrayed. We should have never gone back on those words. They were words that came out of mature deliberation and from the very mouths of our beloved and experienced leaders and not from hot-headed youth. If I understand aright they left no way

for compromise and this was the right psychological time to reiterate them with all our might, and then we would have got the desired result without much quibbling. Our differences—we could have settled them later.

But what do our leaders say? "The British are sincere. Trust them. They have come to give us freedom"—so on and so forth. I hope these pious words are true. Happy indeed will be our unhappy country when such an event comes to pass, but I cannot believe it. It cannot be so. It is against common-sense.

The British have been compelled to send this Mission and these are the reasons why it has come:—

- (a) World opinion is turning anti-British for her indifference towards the question of India's Independence. Britain in order to create a favourable atmosphere in the forthcoming Peace Conference must try to do something for India.
- (b) The story of the patriotic fight of the I.N.A. against the British has instilled great patriotic spirit in the British Indian Army and Police, and Britain knows now that her two greatest weapons by which she not only controlled India but also kept her Empire intact can no longer be trusted and they must be hoodwinked in order to utilise their services abroad—(in Indonesia and the Far East).
- (c) The Labour Government promised in the elections to give India freedom and to satisfy the genuine demand of her voters she must make a show of giving something.

(d) The war has left Britain a third-rate Power, and she knows that India is seething with discontent, and Britain is in no position to suppress by force a revolution which may break out any time. She wants time. The demobilisation of nearly 15 lakhs of well-trained troops will certainly add to the dissatisfaction that now prevails, and these men who know the use of arms and to whom killing is 'daily business' will be difficult to crush. Britain from her past experience knows this.

(e) Although the war has ended, yet a very powerful diplomatic war has commenced. The Allies are now splitting into two different camps, each doing its best to woo the small and weak nations as its real protector. The fight is between Soviet Russia, representing the New Order, and Britain, backed by U. S. A., representing capitalist democracy. India occupies a strategic position between these two forces and Britain in order to gain the goodwill of Indians is trying 'to sell dog's meat by displaying goat's skin.'

By itself the Cabinet Mission would not have succeeded in its real object, but thanks to our leaders, it is going to succeed. This is very unfortunate, for the atmosphere is now very hot, and once it cools down it will take many more years to get such a chance. We should never forget the example of Egypt.*

* General Mohan Singh's opinion has undergone a change now. (Publishers.)

18th April

NEHRUJI, Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan and Saranji

came to see me in the evening. They sat for a few minutes in my cage. It was the first time that I met this great and noble personality of the Frontier. Although he did not speak much, he commanded respect and appeared to me the symbol of truth and courage.

Panditji was cheerful and looked quite healthy and fresh. I understood from his talk that by the end of the month, the Government was thinking of clearing all of us from here. We too are not anxious to remain as guests.

It is very kind of these great men of India to find time from their busy life to come and cheer us.

30th April

FREE! Free! Free! Thousand times free indeed!

Even this life of close incarceration, I would not like to change with the so-called free and high position of an officer of that mercenary army, which I served so loyally at one time. The glittering glory attached to my old rank and position appears to be mere mockery when compared with my present inner freedom.

It is not going to be long when I will be like a free bird. The whole world will be mine to fly and flutter about in. This of course applies to my body alone. My spirit is already free.

1st May

FRIEND! learn to take some responsibility for your actions.

You approach me to assist you to find some job for you. You very liberally and profusely express your

faith in me and are prepared to do anything that I might ask you to do.

I ask you to become a chaukidar in a certain bungalow. You feel insulted. A sweeper's job is vacant, I dare not suggest to you. You will feel hurt. A clerk is required in a certain office. You readily offer yourself for it.

There in that office you find that you cannot immediately get all that you had in your imagination. If your work is not satisfactory, you may even be punished.

Gradually you realise that all is not well in the hard school of life. You blame me. You say to your friends, "This man has ruined my life," although it was I who tried my best to help you.

Such is the fate of those who think they are helping others.

If all goes well with the person helped, it is his own smart work; but if things take a different turn, it is the helper who is blamed.

3rd May

ALL officers are released, only I am left. It is an honour for me to be the last. It is only natural that the man who formed the vanguard in December, 1941, in order to raise the I.N.A., should, now, in its reverse order, act as the rear-guard. There are strong rumours that I, too, may be released tomorrow.

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4th May

LAST night at 9 I received a message that by 9 a.m. tomorrow my kit should be packed up and that I shall be required to report in the office. I welcomed

the news. Now at 8.30 I am ready, awaiting Capt. Hack to escort me to the office...then Release!

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I have just returned from the office. I remain as I was. No hope of my release till a National Government comes into being!

Look at the cheek of the authorities! They wanted me to sign...a silly, stupid and dishonourable piece of paper, and what do they mean by "You are still in the Army!"

Escorted by Capt. Hack I went to the office. The Brigadier met me outside the office and in a sympathetic manner said : "I am pleased you are going home.". I thanked him, for he has always been good to me during my 5 months' stay here.

A few minutes later Lt.-Col. Squire called me in his office where he read to me the terms and conditions under which I was to be released and I was supposed to sign a document.

I had entered his office in a careless manner. He had expected a salute from me, but I intentionally did not perform this military ceremony. This offended him considerably. He looked at me in an angry manner for a while and then said:

"Why are you not in uniform?" I retorted in an indifferent and insulting sort of tone—

"What uniform are you talking of, Colonel ? I am not in your army..."

"Have you been issued with a uniform?" he abruptly said, cutting short my reply.

"Yes, I have been issued with some sort of uniform which I am not going to wear under any circumstances," I replied again in the same careless tone.

The argument lasted for a few minutes in an unfriendly manner. Col. Squire felt a little upset and then he asked me to sit down and began to read the terms of my release. I stopped him from reading all the nonsense and told him frankly that I was not prepared to obey anything of the sort and that I considered myself a free man and that only my movements could be and were restricted. I emphasised that I did not want to deceive him any more than I would deceive myself.

It is true that once I used to be a member of their Army, but now I was not. Having raised an army to fight that army, how could I, with a stroke of the pen, be reinstated? I asked Colonel Squire to search his mind and find an answer to the question whether I had put in an application that I might kindly be taken in the army again. Was there any English officer in the entire Army Headquarters who would listen to such a thing? At the same time were the "high-ups" in the Army Headquarters to promise me the highest promotion if I came to them and served under them again? Did Col. Squire imagine that I, who was determined to fight the British, could accept such an offer? There was no love lost between me and the British. If that was the case, then why should they live in deception and tell me something which was not and could not be? Finally I told him that as a humble follower of Truth I considered it my duty to fight evil, that British imperialism was the greatest evil in India and that the moment I came out I would do all that I could to eradicate and destroy British imperialism.

He listened to me with reluctance and cut me short:—

"Are you prepared to sign this or not?"

The answer was very brief and in one word: "No". "Then you will not be released"—came his final decision.

"I did not beg of you to release me. It was you who sent for me."

The Colonel became very annoyed and ordered Captain Hack to take me back to the cage. Thus here I am again in the same old place. My cell seems to have got attached to me.

A few more months in this manner will do me a lot of good!

Col. Squire has been nice and considerate towards me ever since I was brought here. I am sorry to have offended him. But that could not be helped. It was not Squire and Mohan Singh who were talking but a representative of the notorious British imperialism and a representative of poor and exploited India.

Out of the Detention Camp.

Two hours later Capt. Hack turned up again and said:

"We have decided to get rid of you. You are wanted in the office again."

And now I am honourably released.

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